

The University of Wisconsin

MADISON, WISCONSIN 53706

1520 Van Hise Hall

October 11, 1967

TO: The Membership of Panel 23

FROM: I. L. Baldwin

Sometime earlier I sent you a copy of my letter to Dr. Handler. I am enclosing with this a copy of his letter to me. I am assuming that all of you received the letter which he addressed to the membership of Panel 23.

ILB/jf

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NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH IN THE LIFE SCIENCES
2101 CONSTITUTION AVENUE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20418

October 5, 1967

Dr. Ira Baldwin
303 Van Vleck Hall
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisconsin 53706

Dear Professor Baldwin:

This is in reply to your letter of 3 October.

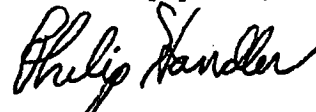
It is my hope that the enclosed letter, addressed to the entire membership of Panel 23 of our study, will present my position in these regards.

Last Saturday I brought the entire matter to the attention of the Committee on Science and Public Policy of the National Academy of Sciences, the parent body which sponsors our study. This group unanimously endorsed the action which had been taken by our Central Committee. They agreed that a controversy with respect to our national position in supporting a program in BW would do nothing to further the general purposes of our report, nothing to further our program in BW and, quite possibly, could damage both.

I hope that my own letter is sufficiently self-explanatory. If there remain questions to which I can or should attempt to answer, I will be delighted to try.

With all best wishes,

Sincerely yours,



Philip Handler
Chairman

PH:hsj

Encl.

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TO: The Membership of Panel 23

FROM: Philip Handler

By now, you will have heard from Professor Halvorson with respect to the decision of the Central Committee of this study concerning publication of the report of your panel.

As you will readily understand, this is a matter which is most embarrassing to me and indeed distasteful.

As you will have learned, the issue was the presentation of material concerning our national program in biological warfare. In a general way, our discussion at Williamstown indicated the presence of three groups, which might be described as (1) violent opponents of any national program in BW, (2) more or less neutrals who find the thought of BW troublesome and (3) advocates.

Almost a day was spent on this matter. I think Dr. Halvorson will agree that we did give the lie to various canards offered up by members of group (1). And it might have been possible to labor at a flat absolutely neutral tone which would have satisfied the members of group (2). But as the day and the evening wore on, I found it necessary to state my own position which was somewhat as follows:

In terms of our report, I could live with the panel's report on BW which explains the need of a national activity in this area and is laudatory of its accomplishments. I could live with a somewhat more neutral flat-tone descriptive of our BW program although I was doubtful that it would serve the purposes of the report. I could live with a total report devoid of a description of our BW program but I could not live with a report which even faintly hinted at censorship or criticism of the BW program because I believe otherwise and would consider any such remarks to be not in the national interest.

Derivative of those statements was the notion that a report from panel 23, devoid of reference to the BW program would resemble a child with its two front teeth missing. The very absence of such a section would painfully call attention to that absence and, in the end, could well become the main subject of discussion of all those who give thoughtful consideration to the total report itself.

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In the end the neutralists carried the day. They agreed that under the circumstances a chapter, in Volume 1 of our total report, on the contributions of biology to the national defense, could be deleted while some of the material is appropriately inserted elsewhere in the report. I agree, but on the proviso that, in drafting the final volume---which is my task---I would be at liberty to use such materials from the draft report of panel 23 as appeared appropriate. It is my intention to do so and indeed to make appropriate reference to our BW program without playing it up too strongly. In that sense, your efforts will by no means have been in vain.

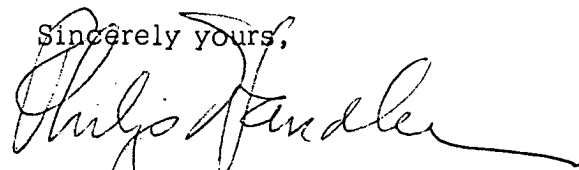
Moreover, let me assure you that in all publications from the study, the existence and membership of your panel will be stated as explicitly as that of any other panel and that your contributions will be acknowledged.

As I stated earlier, I am embarrassed by this outcome and somewhat shamefaced. But, having created a Central Committee for this endeavor, I have no choice but to abide by their decisions. This one was made after painful discussions in which I was almost cruel to some of the members of group (1) and the final decision was a great relief to the great majority of our committee.

To all of you, I can only extend my own personal apologies and those of the membership of our Central Committee, while at the same time extending our most sincere thanks for your efforts which, as I noted above, will most certainly not have been in vain.

With all best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Philip Handler", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Philip Handler
Chairman

PH:hsj